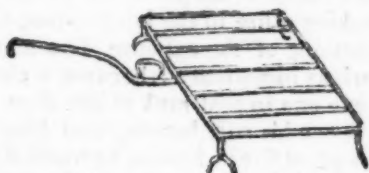


COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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NORTHERN TOUR.

*Little Brickhill,
Friday, 18th December, 1829.*

I, WITH a daughter and two sons, set off from Kensington about three o'clock to-day, and reached this place about nine in the evening. The snow, which I had left upon the ground at Barn-Elm in the morning, there was very little of till we began to approach Dunstable; after which it snowed, and the fields began to appear covered. The frost is not much as yet; but still it is cold; and I now miss my American fire-places, which I have at every place belonging to me where I have to sit down. Mr. Judson, at Kensington, who has made and sold, I believe, four or five hundred of these fire-places, ought, or some others ought, to have made by this time five hundred thousand of them. A room, twenty feet each way, is in such a state of warmth with only the same sized fire as is usually made; it is in such a state of warmth with one of these fire-places, that people seldom think of sitting round the fire, but sit about in every part of the room, even the most distant. The fire is, in short, *in the room*, instead of being *up the chimney*, or in a hole in the wall. When we arrived here this evening, we arrived, of course, with cold feet; and, oh! how we missed the American fire-place! Here we had to take turns, poking our boots up towards the hole in the wall, and holding up the leg, by putting the hands between the knees. Then the backs were cold, while the faces were burning. In short, it does appear astonishing that men of sense, such as are generally found in England, amongst

people of property, should reject them, for mere fashion, for the mere look of the thing: for my part, I think the American fire-places the handsomest; but even if they were *ugly*, they may be made as handsome as you please; but if they were incurably ugly, how is it possible for a man of sense to deem that circumstance of any importance when compared with the warmth, the convenience, the innumerable advantages attending these excellent fire-places; even if you leave out of the question the saving in point of fuel, which is, at least, in amount, one-half. In a small family, and even in a considerable one, supposing it to be ever so genteel, it is often a thing of great convenience, and a very proper thing, to carry on small concerns of cookery at these fire-places. I have no other fire-places at my farm-house; and yet we boil and stew and roast and broil, with the greatest convenience imaginable, and that too for a very large family; the farm-people consisting of ten men and boys and a couple of maids, and of myself, and sometimes wife, and sometimes a daughter. There is, at this fire-place, room for pot, saucepan, tea-kettle, and for roasting apples, or other little things at the same time, and all with the greatest convenience. Mr. Judson has made for us a tin thing to set down before this fire-place to roast in. Any joint of mutton, except, perhaps, a large saddle of mutton; any joint of beef, under twenty-five pounds weight; a turkey, a goose, ducks, fowls; every thing we roast in this manner, and in the nicest manner possible, without the cook burning herself over the blaze of a great fire. The fire warms the room at the same time; and, in short, for a small family of three or four persons, where there are not many servants, and where, indeed, they might be dispensed with altogether, one of these fire-places, properly applied to the purposes of the family, would be a saving of a great many pounds in the year, and would add to the real comfort of the family at the same time. A kitchen-

range, as it is called, is a grand outlet for the earnings of the husband; and then, if it be only to roast a fowl or a duck, whether summer or winter, there must be a fire, which first and last, will consume you a bushel of coals. The fire must be made in the range of this magnitude. Now, if we have a duck or a fowl to roast at the farm, the thing is prepared, put upon the little spit, and, if the kitchen fire be occupied so as to exclude the roaster, it is brought into a little sitting-room, or into my study, if necessary, and there the roast is carried on, and all this in the nicest manner possible.

Were it for the mere saving of money, I would not have occupied so much of the time of my readers; but when I consider how many families there are that might be made comfortable by this change in the sort of fire-place, I cannot refrain from pressing the change upon the attention of my readers. I was not aware of the vast convenience until this winter. I knew, indeed, that they roasted most things at these fire-places in America; but it used to be done by means of a crane and a string, with something standing in the room, by the way of roasting-screen; but Mr. Judson having made a tin roaster for a friend of ours in the country, we have got him, this winter, to make one for us, for the use of the farm, and it is the most nice and convenient thing in the world. The fowls, or whatever it may be, are prepared in the kitchen; where they are put upon the spit, and put into the roaster, not weighing more than five or six pounds in itself, and then the roaster is carried and placed before the fire in one of the other rooms, if the kitchen-fire be too much engaged. A door opens in the back part of the thing, for basting the meat, which you can look at every minute if you please, without exposing your face to be burned by the fire. When the roasting is done, it is taken up, roaster and all, and carried and placed upon a table in the kitchen; there it is taken off the spit, and served up in a minute. Now, I do most strongly recommend this matter to the consideration of all those who are not in an absolutely laborious state of life,

with whom frugality must be of great importance, and who might, by the means of this very fire-place, dispense with that servant which the cookery chiefly induces them to keep. Even the labour of making a fire in the kitchen-range, to say nothing of the expense, is a matter of serious importance; because a clerk, or some one in that rank of life, does not like to see his wife burning and blazing over a great fire; whereas, he would think little, and I trust she would think less, of managing a roast, or a boil, or a stew, at a fire-place, where these operations really give no disturbance at all to a very neat and commodious sitting-room; and, therefore, I do most strongly urge all persons in that situation of life, to make trial of this comfortable and convenient fire-place, observing, at the same time, that I have not the smallest interest in the matter other than that which every man ought to feel in the good and happiness of his neighbours. Having so long enjoyed all the benefits of these fire-places in America, I wrote, in 1811, to a friend at Philadelphia, to send me a model for the making of some for myself in England. When I went to live at Kensington, I gave the model to my neighbour, Mr. Judson, the iron-monger, who was to give me six fire-places in exchange, which he did: so that the proprietorship of the model became his, and there ended my private interest in the matter.

This reminds me of the corn-shelling machine. I wrote to America for two of different constructions, and I got them last winter. Having determined upon which was the best, I gave it to Mr. Judson, he being to give me one in return, which he has done; and I have it now in my granary at Barn-Elm. This sheller will take the grain off a bushel of cobs in a few minutes, and, of course, an immense quantity of corn can be shelled by it in a day. The sheller should stand in a place that is boarded round, so that the grain may not fly about to too great a distance. It strips one cob at a time. A man or a boy turns the wheel, and another drops in the ears as fast as he can drop them. Two boys, and even little boys, would

be quite sufficient for the work ; only, if left to themselves, they would leave off corn-shelling and go to play ; so that I put to corn-shelling a man and a boy. This renders the work of thrashing a mere nothing at all. Two boys would do a hundred bushels a day, with the greatest ease : then you just sift it to take out the dust, or rather bran, a little of which is scraped off by the machine ; and by sifting, you bring little bits of broken cob up to the top : you pick those off, and your corn is ready to be measured up for sale. I observed in my last Register, I think, that the French, perceiving the stir that I had made in England about this same corn, had set seriously to work to cultivate it in the departments nearest adjoining to Paris ; and it is curious enough, that the little pitiful ears, from which all this sprang in England, came from the most northern department of France ! So that it was reserved for me to make the French know, that their own country was capable of producing this valuable grain. I mentioned also, that I had been written to for one of these corn-shellers, to send to France. I gave the letter to Mr. Judson, who, I dare say, has sent it ; all this vast real improvement in the produce of these two countries, will be fairly owing to the Political Register, assisted, indeed, in this case, by several of the London newspapers ; for, without that means in my hands, it would have taken the remainder of my life to have caused to take place that extent of cultivation of this plant, which has now taken place in the space of one year. It is curious to observe here how inventions pass from country to country. The corn-sheller was in use in America, and had been in use for some time when I left that country last, in the year 1818. It was with great difficulty that a friend could prevail upon me to go and see it. I was coming home, and thought that the thing could never be of any use to me ; but to please him, who was fond of curiosities, I went to see it ; and when I saw a corn-field ripe in England, I began to think about the machine, and I sent for one accordingly, and my friend sent me two. The French, though they have

hundreds of thousands of acres in the south of that kingdom, bearing Indian corn, are still, unto this day, rubbing off the grains against the edge of the handle of a frying-pan, or something of that sort, while this machine has been in use in America for ten years, at the least ; and, perhaps, had it not been for the train of circumstances before mentioned, the handle of the frying-pan might have been in use for a hundred years yet to come, as it has been for about five hundred years last past ! For machinery, for inventions to save the labour of man, the Americans beat all the world ! Planted down in a country where all that was wanted was hands, they became, from the very first of their settlement, mechanists almost by nature ; and if you go and examine well into their performances, whether by land or by water, you will find that human invention has been exhausted to save manual labour. I thought, in the year 1818, that I had a pretty thorough knowledge of all their contrivances in this way ; but, going one day towards New York, I saw a great heap of earth that had been flung out for the purpose of making a cellar to a new house ; and the labour to be performed was, to remove that heap of earth, to fill up a low place at about forty or fifty yards distance. This was a job to be performed, in England, with the aid of wheel-barrows, or carts. But hands were scarce ; human bones were valuable ; and, therefore, this job was to be performed, and was under performance, by one man and a couple of oxen. But that one man was not going to take all that earth by eight pounds weight at a time, and put it up into a shovel. He had contrived to throw almost the whole of the work upon the two oxen. He had a thing made somewhat like the tin things with which bakers take up their flour to put it into the scale, to weigh it. There were two handles, made to fasten to the back part of the thing, which was made of wood. The chain that went from the yokes of the oxen, branched off at the end, and was fastened to the sides of this sort of shovel ; and it was the man's business, holding the two handles of the thing, to

make the oxen move by the side of the heap, in such a way as to fill the shovel every time, and to drag it away to the low place, where the man, tipping out the earth, without any stoppage on the part of the oxen, brought them round to the heap again, took another shovel-full, and so on. The heap was very large, containing, perhaps, from sixty to a hundred cart-loads; yet, when I went back at night, I found it all moved into the low spot, there dragged about, and levelled with a drag or harrow; and all by this one man. The same labour would have required from ten to twenty men, in England, with wheel-barrows. Upon seeing this man at his work, I pulled up, and sat, and looked at him for some time. At last, I said, "Upon my word, I should not wonder if you were, at last, to throw upon the oxen and the horses, the labour of preaching to you, or washing your clothes." He looked up at me, and said, "Why does not Mr. Cawbett walk to York?" That was enough. In their mills, in their canals, in their ship-building affairs, in the moving of weights, in the performing of labours of all sorts, they are ingenious beyond all other people. You seldom see a cider-house that is not stuck into the side of a hill, or rising ground, so that the apples may be put into the copper without any lifting up. They are thus ingenious in every thing, but particularly in matters relating to agriculture. If they have a new road to form, do you think that they resort to the tedious use of the spade, the shovel, and the pick-axe? No such a thing. They go to work with a plough, drawn by fifty or more oxen, and turn up the road, and form it at once, as a ploughman forms the round lands for the sowing of wheat. If Mr. M'Adam were there, he would find that roads can be scraped for a fiftieth part of the expense that the roads in England are. A road-scraper, drawn by fifty horses or oxen, would teach him how to make roads smooth, and prepare them for the sun. It is thus with every thing that you can mention or think of; and if the circumstances of the country make it wise and fitting (which I do not know that they do) that

manufactures should become great in that country; and if it were wise and fitting (which I do not know that it is) that England should have a monopoly of those same manufactures; and if the matter turned upon our superior ingenuity in the construction of machines, there would be good ground for us to despair. The Americans invented the famous cloth-dresser, which is now in use in England: Mr. Hulme, whom I lately saw, assures me (and he is a very perfect judge), that they have inventions which we know nothing of, in the manufacture of cotton; and, therefore, let us place no reliance in our superiority in point of inventions of this sort.

Birmingham, 20th Dec. 1829.

We came yesterday from Brickhill to this town. It had snowed very little in the night; but we found the fields here all covered with snow, and the woods, having the snow sticking on the windward side of the trees, lying upon the limbs, and clinging to the twigs, were very beautiful. I have always thought coppices, that is to say, plantations of underwood, much more interesting in the winter, than in the summer. In the summer, they present you with nothing but a solid bank of green on the outside, and on the inside you cannot see a yard before you. In the winter, on the contrary, you see to a great distance; you observe the various forms of the wood, its various colours, its endless variety of manner of growing; you find out the secrets of the birds, see their nests of the summer before; you see the birds themselves, hopping about; whereas, in summer, you get merely a glimpse of them. In summer, you see neither hares, nor rabbits, nor pheasants, nor partridges, except by mere chance; and then only for a moment. In winter, you see them all, and that for a considerable space of time; and in the snow, particularly, you trace all their movements of the night; and, looking at these woods yesterday, brought me back to the time when I used to clump about with a stick in my hand, without any notion of killing any thing, tracking these animals in the snow, distinguishing the track of the hare from that of the rabbit, prying into

the night-workings of the weasels, the stoats, and the pole-cats, and particularly those of the fox, the natural enemy of all farmers and farmers' wives, and of their boys and girls, of course. There was a pretty high quickset hedge on the side of the road between Daventry and Dunchurch, in which I counted no less than eleven bird's-nests, which had escaped the clutches of the boys during the summer, and which made me recollect how I used to be engaged with them when I was a boy, and made similar discoveries in the winter.

As we advanced on the way, the snow became deeper on the fields; and I really longed to be out in it, and thought much more, for the time, about the tracking of hares than about the making of speeches; and I could not help reflecting, and mentioning to my daughter, who was sitting with me, how strangely I had been, by degrees, pulled along, during my whole life, away from those pursuits and those scenes which were most congenial to my mind. Before I quitted America the first time, in the year 1800, I had resolved to go into the country in England, and never to live in a noise again, thinking nothing at all about poverty or riches, or ease or labour. Upon landing, that was soon driven out of my head, and I got into the hurly-burley of politics more deep than ever. At the end of nine years from that time, I had formed a resolution in my own mind to live in the country for the rest of my life. Being at Botley, I was disentangling myself from London by degrees: I had got very nearly to the smock-frock, and I was inculcating in the minds of my children, as they grew up, a love of a country life; I was in the hope of making them all farmers, little or big; I hated London, and saw it as seldom as possible. Just at this time, venomous Grubs laid hold of me, and having heard, and from undoubted authority, that it was the intention of the Government to crush me, and experiencing very soon afterwards, what every one deemed the accomplishment of that determination, my resentment, inspired by the injustice, urged me on to a combat with a dreadfully powerful Govern-

ment. My natural taste, my unsubduable bias for the country, has never been, and never can be overcome as long as I have life; but to yield, to prostrate myself, to suffer myself to be subdued or humbled by *such men*, was what my soul recoiled at. I buckled on the armour of patience, perseverance, labour, sobriety, abstinence; and endeavoured, by the practice of all these, to show my gratitude to that God who had given me so large a portion of health and of strength, and my love of that country which had given me birth, and to a share of the renown of which, and the happiness and greatness of which, I felt myself duly entitled. Thus far the result has responded to the means and the efforts. Truth, as I observed in one of my Registers from America, stands between this Government and me, the palm in one hand and the fool's-cap in the other; the nation stands looking on: and time, the trier of all things, is now just about to make his award; it will not be *six months* before we shall see who has to wear the palm, and who the cap and the bells.

Derby, Monday, 21st Dec. 1829.

At Birmingham there had been an application for the theatre, or playhouse, for me to lecture in; but the lessee, Mr. Lewis, was at Liverpool; and the theatre had been let for this Christmas time to some Italian singers. Besides this, there was the consent of the proprietors to be obtained; for without their consent, neither Mr. Lewis nor the Italians could underlet. The shortest possible delay, even supposing the proprietors and the Italians to consent, was the time required for another application to Mr. Lewis, the result of which, as well as the result of an application to the proprietors, was doubtful. There was another place, and only one other, of sufficient capacity; namely, a repository used for the sale of horses and carriages. To obtain this place, and to arrange matters for using it, required time also; the proprietor being away from the town, and not expected to return before Wednesday. Under these circumstances I determined to give up Birmingham for the present, to proceed

to Derby, and thence to Liverpool, leaving it uncertain whether I should return from Liverpool to Birmingham, or go from Liverpool to Manchester or Bolton, and proceed by that route into Yorkshire. But the present impression upon my mind is, (and I have written to Birmingham to that effect,) that I shall go into Yorkshire first, and come back by Nottingham, Leicester, Birmingham, and shall go thence to Wolverhampton. It is impossible for me to determine precisely which course I will take till I get to Liverpool, whence I will immediately write to all friends in Lancashire and Yorkshire, and also to those of Nottingham, Leicester, Birmingham, and Wolverhampton. I wished to take Birmingham first, for the reasons stated in the last Register; and I have done all that I could do in order to act upon those reasons. I intend to quit Derby on Saturday or Sunday next, and to be at Liverpool on the Sunday night, at latest. I intend to deliver a speech here on Wednesday next, and another on Saturday. It is not quite certain which will be the days. My friends here will do as they like about the matter; for my motto is "always ready."

As to the state of the country, it has been said in London, that Birmingham feels less of distress than other places. That the readers of the Register may have some idea of the state of Birmingham, I will state a fact or two which I have from unquestionable authority. The first is, that the operative gun-lock makers, who used to earn, in ordinary times, from thirty to forty shillings a week, now earn *four shillings and sixpence a week!* Some other trades are somewhat better off; but the whole are working at wages so miserably low, as to afford nothing like an adequate maintenance, even for a single man. Another fact is, that the men in the iron works are become little better than a set of beings fed from hand to mouth, in exchange for their labour. It is said, upon what I deem good authority, that the iron-masters have taken to themselves the business of supplying the workmen with victuals, drink, and other necessities, in exchange for their labour,

superseding altogether the dealings with shop-keepers and victuallers, and suffering no money to pass between them and their labourers; nay, to such a pitch is this carried, that they have their workmen **SHAVED** by contract, and pay the shavers at *so much per dozen*. The workmen would shave themselves, if the masters would give them the penny, or half-penny, or whatever it is they pay; but this they will not do, it is said, and that no money whatever passes between them. This is a state of barter in reality! I was further informed, that the barbers, or some of them, in Birmingham, finding that the shaving by the dozen so materially lessened their trade, had stuck up bills, notifying that they would *shave for a red herring!* This is real barter. This shows the great and pressing want of money. With regard to these minor transactions, the measure of value is gone; money is banished from a community which has long boasted of the endless sources of its wealth. Our clever men of Whitehall and St. Stephen's, have found out the way of reducing a rich country to poverty, and of bringing down a proud and powerful nation to a state in which it declares, or as good as declares, that it cannot go to war.

There seems to be an opinion prevailing in Birmingham, that the Ministers will return to the small paper-money; though there are many, I am informed, who wish that, at all events, we may never see that accursed thing again. There appears to be very little division in opinion with regard to the cause of the distress: people are also very much united in the opinion that the distress cannot, and will not, cease of itself: thus far there is very little division in opinion: the nonsense of GOULBOURN, and of PEEL, and of WILMOT HORTON: the over-trading, over-population, and over-production gentry, seem all to be laughed at as fools and idiots; and, as to things coming about of themselves, there is scarcely a man to be found fool enough to believe it.

The only point upon which men are divided, is this: Which is the proper remedy? Shall we return to the base

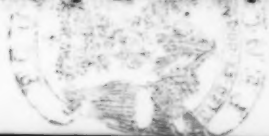
paper-money; or shall we come back to the taxes, and the expenditure which existed before the five-pound notes were made? This is the only point upon which men differ; and, as far as I can find, the merchants and manufacturers are, upon the whole, against a return to the paper, while the landlords and farmers were every where for such return.

We set off from Birmingham a little before three o'clock yesterday, and we stopped and slept at Burton, the roads being heavy, and we not liking to disturb friends at a late hour on Sunday night. We found the snow rather deeper than it had been on the south side of Birmingham; and the frost, last night, was pretty smart. In this part of England, the coals are so abundant, and of course so cheap, that there is no want of plenty of fire, and you are not put into a perishing room as you are in the southern and western counties, where coals have to be brought from a great distance. But even here, amidst all this abundance of fine fuel, we have found the rooms at the inns very different indeed from those which are blessed with our American fire-places. We were, for instance, at Burton last night, shown into a room with a very good fire; but, when we found ourselves drawn up close round the hole in the wall, with a great bank of brass, called a *fender*, before us, intended, apparently, for the express purpose of keeping off any little heat that might descend by chance from the lofty hole, and condescend to come and comfort the feet; finding ourselves drawn up in a shivering semicircle round this hole and bank, and finding that the great coats still clung to our backs, we looked back with longing recollections to Kensington and Barn-Elm, for the fire-places of which these coals are so eminently calculated. They are in great pieces, like so many stones of various shapes. Three or four of these laid together upon the hearth of an American fire-place, would make a fire as bright and blazing as that of American wood. These coals are longer in lighting, and are, perhaps, less durable than the Newcastle coals which we have in London; but they burn brighter; blaze a great deal more, make

a more bright and cheerful fire, and leave comparatively a very small quantity of cinders. It is snowing slightly now, and the air seems as if there would be a heavy fall. I hope that there is plenty of snow in Surrey; for I am sure that it is good for the land. We have not had a good deep snow in that part of England for several years; and I hope that we shall have it now. I know that my pigs and oxen and cows have plenty of mangel wurzel, and have the finest Swedish turnips that ever grew out of the earth. I know that my people have plenty of beef and pork and puddings and bread and beer; and I have more pleasure in thinking about the enjoyments of all these, than I could possibly have pain from reflecting on the easy lives which the snow will compel them to lead. I should like very much to be at home on Christmas Day; but knowing that all are well off there, I shall enjoy myself amongst my friends at Derby.

The situation of the greater part of the operative manufacturers, in this county, in Nottinghamshire, and in Leicestershire, is said to be truly deplorable. There are supposed to be thirty thousand stocking-frames; and the wages of the weavers have declined to such a point, as to leave the poor creatures scarcely the means of bare existence. The weavers have not, at this sort of work, more than four shillings and sixpence a week per man, at the weaving of cotton or worsted. Those that weave silk, get, in some cases, a little more; and some of them, perhaps, six or seven shillings; but even this will not afford half a sufficiency of food.

One of the consequences of this state of things, is, the unsaleableness of the coarser parts of butcher's meat. Formerly, the richer part of the community purchased the best joints, while the working people took the remainder; but now, though there are customers enough for the *best*, there is nobody to buy the coarser parts of the meat; or, at least, there has been a falling off here to a very great degree. Workmen, that used to purchase five or six pounds of meat at a time, now take a pound or half a pound,



and some of them, none at all; and their dress, their looks, their movements, and the sound of their voices, correspond with this debasement with regard to their food. Potatoes appear to be the best of their diet. Some live upon boiled cabbage and salt, and others are said to live on *scalded bran*, which, as most readers know, is what we call a *mash*, given to horses when they have colds. As to the potatoes, the cabbage, and the bran, they are not sufficiently good food for even a lean hog, in the winter season.

One thing I have heard of in this county, even more horrible than that which I mentioned a few days ago in London. I here allude to the statement which I read in the Nottingham Review, relative to the sale of the labourers at STAPLETON. But that which I have now heard, supposes the people to be treated, not as slaves; not as negro slaves; but actually as beasts, whose *sexual connexion* is superintended by their masters, after the same manner that farmers and breeders superintend, for similar purposes, the connexions amongst their cattle, sheep, and pigs; or as a dog-breeder superintends the connexion between canine animals of different sexes. In short (for I must come to it at last), the plain and horrible tale is this: that, in some places, those who have the command over the poor, keep the married women separated from their husbands; do not suffer them to see each other but once in so long a time; then, for only so many minutes, and never out of the presence of the overseer, or person appointed by him; and all this for the odious, the shameless, the beastly purpose of preventing that increase of family which the parson at the marriage has joined with the parties in praying God may take place, and which God himself has said shall be considered as a blessing!

And this is ENGLAND! This is the envy of surrounding nations, and the admiration of the world; this is that country which was for so many ages renowned as the land of liberty, and of good living!

While men are in this situation; while such is the degradation and misery of the common people, who is to be surprised

that they commit offences against the law! Who is to be surprised that they pay no attention to those duties which were held sacred by their fathers! Who is to be surprised if they be reckless of consequences? Who is to be surprised that they use the means, however desperate, to satisfy their hunger! Who is to be surprised at the increase of jails, or at any of those things which mark the fearful progress of crime? Accordingly, to be detected in theft or robbery appears now not to be thought a shame amongst the working classes of the people, for whom the law has no longer any terrors, it being impossible for it to inflict on them sufferings greater than they now endure. The jail is far preferable to the poor-house, in point of living, while the sufferers deem it no disgrace. Even death is a deliverance from the infamous regulations regarding the intercourse of the sexes; and as to *transportation*, it is a thing generally hailed with delight. It is in evidence before the House of Commons, in printed evidence, that the labouring people in Kent declared publicly, that they would be glad to do something to cause themselves to be condemned to the hulks; seeing how much better off the convicts were, than the poor labouring people, who had committed no crime. This evidence was given before the Poor-law Committee of 1828, by a gentleman who was overseer of the poor for the parish of Minster, which lies in the neighbourhood of the hulks. The labouring men, seeing how much better off the convicts were than they themselves were, had no hesitation to express their desire to be able to commit some crime, in order that they might share in the enjoyments of the convicts. The magistrates of Berkshire make a greater allowance of food to the felons in the jails, than to the honest labouring man working in the fields. The magistrates of Warwickshire, at their Quarter Sessions of January, 1828, agreed to petition the Parliament to pass a law to dispense with the trial by jury, for various felonies committed by young persons, seeing that the rising generation were so generally thieves; and the chairman of

these magistrates, Sir E. E. WILMOT, in a pamphlet published by him on the occasion, stated as a reason for this increase of theft, that the labouring people were so miserably fed, clad, and lodged, that they thought it a happiness to get into jail, where they were better fed, clad, and lodged, than at their own miserable homes. It is curious to observe, that neither this Sir E. E. WILMOT, or any one else, who has made these complaints against the people, has ever proposed any thing to make the people better off. Additional jails; solitary cells; treadmills; every species of invention for adding severity to the punishments. New laws for punishing thieves, the receivers of stolen goods, poachers, embezzlers, forgers. Law upon law, to inflict punishment on offenders; at last, a proposition to dispense with the trial by jury. The miseries and sufferings of the people are acknowledged all the while; and yet not one of these gentlemen ever propose any thing to diminish those miseries and sufferings. They acknowledge that the misery produces the crime, and yet they never make an attempt to diminish the misery.

One of the consequences of this horrible and unnatural state of things, is that sort of defiance of the law; that sort of contempt of it, which we observe daily in those who have to obey even its most awful behests. In twenty instances we have seen persons, receiving even sentence of death, treating the judge with the most sovereign contempt, and his sentence along with him; and as to other sentences, hearing them not only with indifference, but with jocular levity. In innumerable instances, men sentenced to transportation, have told the chairman, or the judge, to *sit sticking up there till they come back again*. This has become a sort of standing jest in criminal courts; in those courts, till within these forty years so revered by the very lowest and most insensible of the people. It is notorious, that when a band of men are put into the caravan, and setting off to the hulks or to Botany Bay, great crowds always assemble around them, and that they go off amidst three regular cheers, as if it were a triumph;

as if it were a joyous event; as if it were matter of boast. And this is the envy of surrounding nations, and the admiration of the world! This is a kingdom, swelled up into an empire, under the control and guidance of the "*greatest Captain of the age*"; and he coming, too, from the "*first flower of the earth, and first gem of the sea*!"

To an end this thing must come, in one way or another. The peaceable way is that which every good man must desire; but to have that, the misery must be put an end to: the people must be once more induced to reverence the laws: they must be once more made to feel that they have something to lose; must once more prefer being at large to being in the jails or the hulks; must once more respect and esteem their superiors in point of wealth and rank; men must once more be permitted to see their wives without the superintendence of an overseer; must once more have bread and beer, and meat, instead of water, potatoes, salt, and cabbage, or scalded bran: this change must take place before the end come, or dreadful indeed must be that end.

To remove the miseries, there is but one way; and that is, by removing the taxes. The taxes, and their concomitant monopoly, are the cause of the misery; and these taxes must be diminished, or the misery must remain. To shuffle the paper-money backward and forward: to cause bank-restrictions; to play off these miserable tricks, or any other of the same character or nature, will be of no avail whatever. If a repeal of the Small-note Bill were to take place, it might produce a postponement of the catastrophe; but that postponement would merely lead to an issue of assignats, and would only add to the awfulness of the ruin in the end. It is, therefore, the business of those who have the management of the nation's affairs, to reduce the taxes to the amount at which they were *previous to the issuing of the small paper-money*. Whether they will do this is a great deal more than I can say; but do it they must; or a convulsion is the end.

WM. COBBETT.

MR. O'CONNELL.

It is a long time since we heard any thing of this gentleman; and it would really seem to be but ill luck for him that we have to hear of him now. I am about to insert, from the Courier newspaper, an article taken by that paper from the Old Times; which article appears to be a regular report of the proceedings of a Meeting of the Irish Catholic Association, of which Mr. O'Connell was the chief. But, first of all, I will insert an extract from the Courier newspaper, in order to show my readers how the Government feel towards this gentleman.

"We have recently expressed ourselves pretty freely as to the merits of Mr. O'CONNELL as a public man. We hazarded a conjecture that his influence was on the decline in his own country, and that it would be utterly extinguished in the ensuing parliamentary session. But if the report of the Meeting of the Finance Committee be entitled to credit (and it bears intrinsic evidence of authenticity), the learned and honourable gentleman has anticipated the æra fixed upon in our prediction; he has thought fit to strip the bug-bear of its disguise; and the man of the people, the regenerator of his country, the terror of the aristocracy, the *Spes altera Romæ*, is reduced to his proper dimensions; is once again Mr. O'CONNELL: how much is implied in that simple Milesian patronymic!

"We shall spare our readers and ourselves the pain of repeating language which defrauds Billingsgate of its old pre-eminence, or detailing recriminations which, if substantiated, unfit the parties for the intercourse of gentlemen; we shall take no part in the appropriation of the miserable spoils of a miserable peasantry; we shall leave to those personally interested, the task of reconciling conflicting statements, and accounting for inexcusable breaches of private confidence, and we now dismiss them (we wish we could say for ever), with the consolatory reflection that they have, by their own acts, incapacitated them-

selves for further mischief; *sic transit gloria turbæ.*"

This, the reader may depend, would not have been written, if the writer had not been sure that the Government would approve of it. Next comes the report, spoken of above, which I insert without any commentary at all.

IRELAND.

INTERESTING AND EXTRAORDINARY MEETING.

At a Meeting of the Finance Committee, held in Dublin, at the rooms of the late Catholic Association, on Friday last, Mr. O'Gorman moved, that Mr. O'Dwyer should take the Chair.

Mr. O'CONNELL commenced the proceedings by stating that he was public accuser. He had to complain of Mr. Richard O'Gorman having taken away two minute-books belonging to the Association. He considered that no one had a right to the books of the Association but some one chosen by the people of Ireland, or the Finance Committee. They were public property, and Mr. O'Gorman had no right to take them without either authority.

Mr. NICHOLAS P. O'GORMAN said he was now put upon his defence. He did not claim any individual right to the books, but, as secretary to the Catholics of Ireland, he claimed the custody not only of the two books now in his possession, but of all the books and papers of the Catholic body. He was now the only accredited and authorised officer of the Catholics of Ireland.

Mr. SHEIL: There is nothing like taking up a strong position.

Mr. R. O'GORMAN was quite astonished at Mr. O'Connell's motion. He, for his part, could not fathom the motive of it, unless that Mr. O'Connell wanted to get possession of the books himself. He (Mr. O'Gorman) had no notion of any individual lording it over the Catholic body.

Mr. O'CONNELL said, it was Mr. O'Gorman who was lording it over the Catholic body, when he took away the books, without consulting them. This he (Mr. O'Connell) would not permit.

No individual should do this. He conceived that it would more become any other individual to praise Mr. N. P. O'Gorman, than his own brother. Although he had as high an opinion of Mr. O'Gorman as any one, he protested against this assumption of authority.

Mr. D. RONAYNE fully agreed with his friend Mr. O'Connell.

Mr. O'GORMAN stated that he intended to write a History of the late Catholic Association, and that as secretary to the body he had a right to the books.

Mr. SHEIL supposed that Mr. O'Gorman claimed title as executor to the late Association, and had taken out letters of administration in his own court of prerogative. His promised history of the Association would, no doubt, be a valuable addition to the literature of the country.

Mr. O'CONNELL hoped it would be a true history of the Association.

Mr. D. O'REILLY thought Mr. O'Gorman the fittest depository of the books.

Mr. O'CONNELL then stated, that if the motion were carried, and that Mr. O'Gorman should restore the books, he (Mr. O'Connell) would move on the next Friday, that all the books of the late Association should be committed to him (Mr. O'Gorman), under the control, as to inspection, of three persons to be chosen by ballot.

Mr. O'GORMAN remarked, that if he did produce the books, perhaps he might as well produce an accurate account which he had taken of the Deputation of 1825. It was a curious document.

Mr. O'CONNELL's motion was then put and carried.

Mr. SHEIL then came forward and stated, that in pursuance of his notice on the books, he had to move that Mr. Francis Wyse be repaid a sum of 400*l.* for costs, &c., which he had been put to by reason of the prosecution of certain magistrates in the county of Wexford, in 1825. They were all acquainted with the facts, and he would not recapitulate them; but as a just debt, he thought it should be paid or put amongst the recognised claims.

Mr. COPPINGER made a few observa-

tions, and seconded the motion of Mr. Sheil.

Mr. O'CONNELL: There was now no money in hand to pay this claim, and as it was connected with unpleasant matter, it was better the Committee should not go into its merits. He would therefore move an adjournment of the question.

Mr. LAWLESS seconded Mr. O'Connell's motion. The question was then about to be put, when

Mr. FRANCIS WYSE said, that although not a member of the Committee, he claimed to be heard as a creditor of the Catholic body. He was by no means surprised that Mr. O'Connell should endeavour to get rid of the question by a side-wind. He (Mr. Wyse) did not come there as a mendicant, seeking a gratuity for services he had tendered to his country; he came to claim a just debt. The facts were shortly these: In 1824, Counsellor Bric had been sent by the late Association to superintend a prosecution in the county of Wexford. He (Mr. Wyse) had tendered him some assistance, and Mr. Bric requested he would communicate confidentially with him on any matter of interest to the Catholic body. He (Mr. Wyse) accordingly soon after forwarded to the said Counsellor Bric, a letter containing a statement of some supposed local grievance, and directed such letter to the care of Counsellor O'Connell, Merrion-square, Dublin. His letter was marked private. He was of course less cautious than if it had been an ordinary letter; they might conceive his astonishment when he found his private letter had been read at the Association Rooms, and that attested copies had been given to Mr. Fitzhenry for the avowed purpose of founding three actions against him: probably, Mr. O'Connell might now be able to tell who had opened his private letter, and sent it to the Association. It had caused several actions to be instituted against him (Mr. Wyse), in one of which a verdict of 500*l.* damages had been given, with costs. The damages he had compromised; the amount, which he paid in discharge of the costs of these actions, he now claimed as a just debt. He had been treacher-

ously betrayed; and his private communication had been most improperly made public in a way he would not designate.

Mr. O'CONNELL was anxious from the commencement the matter should not have been brought forward. The details were by no means to the advantage of Mr. Wyse, who had brought the litigation on himself, by refusing the arbitration which was proposed to him. Mr. Wyse had placarded him (Mr. O'Connell) for seven or eight months, in all the newspapers, on foot of this very transaction. He (Mr. Wyse) had called him liar, scoundrel, coward, and other epithets, of which he took no notice, but which he made him (Mr. Wyse) a present of. Mr. Wyse's conduct in the transaction, had been atrocious and abominable. He brought himself into a dilemma. The facts were these: That in the first place, the letter was not, marked "private." It was directed to Mr. Bric, at his (Mr. O'Connell's) house, it was true, and, as was his (Mr. O'Connell's) custom, he opened it, and finding it was on matters of interest to the Association, he sent it with other letters to the Rooms. He would admit that he did sanction giving copies to Mr. Corcoran, the attorney, because he was a member of the Association, and he thought it unsafe to refuse copies of any such documents. He afterwards moved that the originals should be sent to Mr. Wyse, as it related to a private right, and as he considered the Association should never be the vehicle for slander. Well, an action had been brought against Mr. Wyse, and every tittle of his letter proved to be false. Mr. Wyse had made an apology to the magistrates, to get rid of the damages. The costs he had brought upon himself by refusing arbitration, which Mr. Fitzhenry proposed to him in the Association Rooms, in his (O'Connell's) presence.

Mr. Wyse, in reply, said, that abuse from Mr. O'Connell carried no weight with it; and as he himself had stated that he (Mr. Wyse) had in print designated him as a "liar, a scoundrel, and coward," and that he had not thought proper to take any notice of it whatever, he

(Mr. Wyse) considered him totally beneath his consideration as a gentleman.

Mr. SHEIL regretted such personalities should be used.

Mr. WYSE: Yes; but under such circumstances, how is it possible not to reply! Mr. O'Connell had used the words himself; but as to the facts, he positively and solemnly denied Mr. O'Connell's assertion that the letter was not marked "private." He accused Mr. O'Connell with breaking the seal of his private letter, and, he might say, delivering him up to his opponents; and the Meeting would be astonished when he should tell them, that at the very time Mr. O'Connell was giving his assent to have copies of his letters taken, and urging him to concede to the arbitration proposed by Mr. Fitzhenry, he was his (Mr. Fitzhenry's) legal and confidential adviser.

Mr. O'CONNELL: Such is not the fact; such is not true.

Mr. WYSE stated he had read the opinions and cases submitted to him by Mr. Fitzhenry.

Mr. O'CONNELL: They were not the subject of the action against Mr. Wyse; they were on matters as to right of way. He had not given more than five or six opinions to Mr. Fitzhenry, and denied he was his confidential counsel.

Mr. SHEIL: If his recollection served him, a right of way was the very subject on which Mr. Wyse's letter was constructed.

Mr. R. O'GORMAN said he was present when Mr. Wyse was offered arbitration.

Mr. SEGRUE and Mr. CURRAN confirmed Mr. O'Gorman's statement, according to their recollection.

Mr. WYSE: The only direct offer which he could bring to his recollection, was made to him by Mr. O'Connell. Could it be supposed that he would ever trust himself to a man who had acted as Mr. O'Connell had done towards him, and who had acknowledged himself that he was the private counsel of Mr. Fitzhenry at the very time?

Mr. O'CONNELL: Several offers were made to Mr. Wyse, which he obstinately declined, and now he wants the As-

sociation to pay his costs. Mr. Wyse had admitted his letter to be false, and had made an apology to the magistrates, to relieve himself from the damages.

Mr. WYSE: That is not true. I never made such an apology. I indignantly scouted it, and Mr. O'Connell knows by whom.

Mr. SHEIL recollected a written apology had been drawn up by him, as Mr. Wyse's counsel; but Mr. Wyse did not sign it.

Mr. DOWELL O'REILLY was never more surprised than at the declarations which had been made. Mr. Wyse had been basely treated, and he did not wonder at his refusing Mr. O'Connell, the private counsel of Mr. Fitzhenry, as an arbitrator: he only wondered that, after opening a letter marked "private," any defence could be attempted.

Mr. O'CONNELL: Little Dowell, what a passion you are in! It was not marked "private." He had torn off the cover, or it would set the matter at rest."

Mr. WYSE was astonished at the consummate effrontery of Mr. O'Connell, but fortunately the attested copies, taken by Mr. Corcoran (Mr. Fitzhenry's attorney), were yet in existence, and would prove the fact.

Mr. O'CONNELL: The gentleman may go on as he pleases.

Mr. LAWLESS had come to the Rooms determined to vote against Mr. Wyse's claim, but after what had passed he would now vote for it. He thought it a case of extreme hardship and oppression, and a sufferer in the cause should not be let in for loss; but then the money was all out.

Mr. SHEIL said it was a case of great hardship, and he thought the debt, in common justice, ought to be paid.

After some further discussion, the original question was put and lost, with some dissentients.

Mr. WYSE then said, that he by no means considered the decision as binding on him, or affecting the merits of his claim.

The Meeting then adjourned.

COLCHESTER PETITION.

A MEETING has been held at Colchester, not of the county of Essex, but of persons in that neighbourhood. Mr. WESTERN appears to have been the principal actor. The parties agreed to petition the Parliament; and the petition, as published in the papers, is to be in the following words.

"To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled."

"The humble Petition of the undersigned Owners and Occupiers of Land in the neighbourhood of Colchester, and of the Inhabitants of that place,

"Showeth,—That your petitioners are most anxious to press upon the attention of your Honourable House the declining and wretched condition of the people, more especially that portion of them whose subsistence is derived from the cultivation of the soil."

"That the sources of the evils and privations under which all classes of the community labour, are so various and complicated, that your petitioners are desirous to avoid entering upon those topics which are liable to be treated as speculative in their nature, or doubtful in their operation; but there is one paramount subject, the truth of which it is as impossible to deny as it would be censurable to conceal; viz., that the multiplied affairs of this country cannot be carried on, through the agency of a currency almost exclusively metallic, in its minute operations, while the enormous public burdens which depress every branch of industry, not only remain undiminished in their nominal amount, but are greatly aggravated in their pressure, in so far that, being contracted in paper, their payment is now exacted chiefly in gold."

"Of the inestimable advantages derived from an invariable standard of exchange, your petitioners are sensible; but it is only when the expenses of a country are contracted in, or have reference to, the actual quantity of

“metal, that the practicability of the
 “principle can be demonstrated, and its
 “benefits experienced. But, at the
 “same time, your petitioners are too
 “sensible of the destructive effects which
 “are inseparable from a speculative
 “medium of credit, to desire a recur-
 “rence to an unlimited issue of paper,
 “and most earnestly implore your Ho-
 “nourable House to take into your early
 “and earnest consideration, the only
 “safe and substantial remedy, which is
 “to be found in a material diminution of
 “the public expenditure, in the repeal
 “of those taxes which bear almost ex-
 “clusively upon the industrious classes,
 “and which are peculiarly aggravated
 “by their accumulated amount through
 “their indirect operation, and, in the
 “place of taxes of this nature, to sub-
 “stitute an impartial and judiciously
 “graduated scale of taxation upon the
 “property of the country; a tax which
 “is obtained from those who have the
 “means of payment, simple in its ope-
 “ration, cheap in its collection, difficult
 “of evasion, and free from the increase
 “which is inseparable from indirect im-
 “positions.

“That, while your petitioners are far
 “more anxious that the paramount ne-
 “cessity of reducing the public expen-
 “diture should be recognised by your
 “Honourable House, and the Ministers
 “of the Crown, than to dictate the
 “means of its accomplishment, yet they
 “cannot forbear to express their de-
 “cided opinion, that in no way can the
 “burdens of the industrious classes be
 “so efficiently alleviated, as by the re-
 “peal of the severe and unequal duties
 “upon malt and beer.

“That, while your petitioners are pre-
 “pared to admit that no very sensible
 “effect in a financial view can be derived
 “from a reduction of the salaries of the
 “servants of the Crown, or from the
 “Civil and Pension Lists, they are not
 “insensible to the invaluable influence
 “of an example of economy in the
 “highest quarters; of the comfort such
 “a testimony of commiseration would
 “afford to the people; and of a deter-
 “mination in the Government of the
 “country, to carry on its affairs under

“the powerful sanction of public appro-
 “bation, rather than by the precarious
 “and purchased succour of political and
 “profitless dependents.

“And your petitioners will ever pray.”

There is, in this petition, a most pro-
 digious confusion of ideas. It is next to
 impossible to tell what the petitioners
 really have in view: they want the taxes
 lessened; they petition to have some of
 them taken off; yet they do not see how
 any reduction can be made of the Civil
 List or the Pension List; and, of course,
 they can see no means of reducing the
 expenses of the army, of the ordnance,
 and of the navy. They do not so much
 as hint at a reduction of the interest of
 the Debt; and yet they would take off
 ten or fifteen millions of taxes. They
 acknowledge the necessity of a fixed
 measure of value; and yet, they want a
 paper money; a thing which never can
 be fixed in its value. They want to sub-
 stitute, instead of direct taxes, a tax on
 property or income; without appearing
 to perceive, that the income from pro-
 perty is already disappearing very fast.
 In short, it is a heap of nonsense: it is
 what nobody can understand: it is one of
 those complicated and foolish things with
 regard to which a man may take which
 ever side he pleases, without giving just
 offence even to the petitioners them-
 selves. The people of Essex have been
 called calves. If this be a true picture
 of their minds, they are calves indeed!
 From petitions like this, no good can
 come: they will serve to keep the Minis-
 try in countenance, and prevent any at-
 tempt at doing that which the country
 actually requires.

MOTHER CHURCH.

THE *Morning Herald* of Monday, in
 its city article, has some very interesting
 remarks on a passage, taken from what
 it calls a treasury morning paper. The
 passage, thus taken by the *Herald*, is in
 the following words: “Some important
 “changes are meditated, and even de-
 “termined on, with respect to the Church.
 “We do not speak of the reform of the
 “ecclesiastical law. The Duke of Wel-

“lington, we believe, sees no reason
 “why some of the bishops should not
 “submit to a *distribution of their pro-*
 “*perty*, as the wages submitted, at no
 “long distance of time ago, to a reduc-
 “tion.” There has been a sort of deal
 rumour, *bruit sourd*, as the French call
 it, upon this subject, for some time past.
 The matter was first mooted in that num-
 ber of the Quarterly Review which I
 noticed some time ago, and in which the
 ugly and grizzle-headed old MURRAY,
 the bookseller of Albemarle Street, had
 instructed his hired scribes to call me
 “*the hoary democrat of Kensington.*”
 In the lecture which I gave in London
 on the 17th instant, I recommended the
 taking of six millions a year from the
 Church. I am certain that there can be
 no just settlement of the nation's affairs,
 unless the nation resume the possession
 of a large part of the public property,
 called church property, and apply it to
 other public purposes. From what Mr.
 HARVEY said at the Colchester Meeting,
 one would imagine him to believe, that
 the Prince of Waterloo is prepared for
 this grand push: if he be, he will have
 the support of *the whole mass of the*
people. Upon this subject there is
 scarcely a dissenting voice; and when I
 mentioned the six millions in the lecture
 just referred to, the applause was truly
 thundering. Here we are all of one
 mind; and here the Prince of Waterloo
 will find the resource greater even than
 that which he expects.

The writer in the *Herald* is under a
 mistake with regard to the effects of an
 abolition of tithes. He observes, that
 the farmer would gain nothing by that
 abolition, and that the gain would be to
 the landlords only. He supposes, there-
 fore, that the land would be relieved
 from tithes, and that the property would
 pass from the parson to the landowner.
 They must be very stupid men indeed,
 who would make a change of this sort,
 which would only destroy many thou-
 sands of little gentlemen, to add to the
 riches of great ones. Oh, no! this is
 not the thing that a sensible minister
 would do; and not the thing that the
 nation would permit to be done. The
 tithes would be *sold*, to be sure, or re-

deemed, if the landowner chose it, or
 let until they could be sold or redeemed;
 and thus the annual worth of them, or
 the worth of them in fee, would be
 brought to the national account; and the
 sums thus received would help to liqui-
 date that Debt which was contracted to
 carry on the war, one of the greatest
 objects of which was *to restore tithes to*
France, and thereby deter the English
 from following the example of the
 French. The same may be said with
 regard to the church lands, which would
 be let, to be sure, or sold, for the benefit
 of the nation at large. Still a very
 ample allowance might be made to the
working clergy, who are a set of men as
 respectable as, and, perhaps, more op-
 pressed than, any other set of men in
 England.

The editor of the *Morning Herald*
 has not taken time to reflect, when he
 was observing that the bishops held their
 property *by the same tenure* as all other
 proprietors hold theirs. A very little re-
 flection would have taught so acute a
 writer, that the church property is pub-
 lic property; that it is held in trust; and
 that other property, in general, is private
 property, and not held in trust; that the
 former is given and enjoyed for public
 purposes; and that the latter is held and
 enjoyed for private purposes; that the
 Parliament, therefore, has a right to dis-
 pose of the former, for public uses; and
 that it has no right so to dispose of the
 latter; that the Parliament *frequently*
has so disposed of the former; and that
 it never has so disposed of the latter.
 These are very broad distinctions, and
 ought to be kept constantly in view. Let
 but the Prince of Waterloo determine
 upon the thing; and I pledge my life
 that he will stand in no need of support;
 there being nine hundred and ninety-
 nine persons out of every thousand in
 favour of the measure, which is called
 for by justice, by reason, by the peace
 of the nation, and the safety of the
 crown.

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